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1914
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Better Than Gold

By the Author of
The Winning of Latane

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Oliver Perry Parker

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To my Mother
My Heroine Pattern

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BETTER THAN GOLD is the result of two forces—the unexpected success of my first play (*The Winning of Latane*), and an ambition to write a better one.

This play is designed for amateurs, and can be staged wherever plays are given. Do not discredit the boys and girls by thinking it is too heavy for them. There is inborn in every boy and girl a love for action, and a good plot brings this out. They will learn the lines more easily and take more interest in a good play than they will in "*Blood and Thunder*."

The author therefore presents this play in the hope that it may find friends who will give it the chance to make good. If it fails the loss will fall on the NATIONAL DRAMA Co., for they do not ask a penny for unsatisfactory productions. Write them for terms and reservations.

THE AUTHOR.

Gibson, Tenn.
Jan. 19th, '14.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

THE CARPENTERS:

HOWARD, SR.—Wealthy gold miner.
ELIZABETH—His wife.
HOWARD—His philanthropic son.
ROBERT WOOLSEY—His step-son.
KLINK—Butler.
GRINS—Howard's valet.

THE KINGSLEY'S:

ANDREW—Wealthy gold miner.
MARGUERITE—His designing wife.
ALICE—Their daughter.
McKLUSKY—Butler.
PRINCE BAVARI—"Of the Hapsburgs."
MISS ROBINSON—Howard's secretary.
NELL TOONE—Mountain girl.
AUNT LAURA—Mammy.
BILL SINGLETON—Mountaineer.

ALSO:

DR. BASSETT.
DR. SPEIGHT.
DR. MAYBEN.
DR. KING.
HEAD NURSE.

(NOTE—The above cast may be doubled as follows: Prince and Bill Singleton and any doctor; Alice and Nell; Andrew Kingsley and any doctor; Mrs. Kingsley and Nell and Mrs. Carpenter, or Miss Robinson or Head Nurse; Klink and Mc-Klusky. It is often the case that better productions may be had by these doubles.

Time—Two hours.

ACT I.

SCENE—Parlor; Home of Andrew Kingsley; evening.

STAGE SETTING—Doors or portieres R. and L. Library table F. C. Two rockers R. and L. of table and half back. Settee L. and to rear. Such wall and other decorations as are convenient to give scene appearance of wealth.

COSTUMES AND MAKE-UP—**PRINCE**, full evening dress; hair brushed straight back and bristling; black mustache, turned up sharply at corners of mouth with chin penciled, to imitate goatee; gloves, hat and cane are not necessary, but can use monocle to good effect. This character should be good at imitating a foreigner's manner of speech.

MRS. KINGSLEY—Full evening dress; a woman of fifty, full of designs, and willing to sacrifice her daughter to society.

MR. KINGSLEY—Full evening dress; a man of sixty, prosperous and wealthy, and in sympathy with his wife's designs.

ROBERT—Flashy street suit; a young fellow without a purpose, but ample plans of his own.

McKLUKY—Butler's suit; long, wide side-burns; should always stand at attention with chin high.

MR. CARPENTER—Prince Albert; a man of sixty and much gold; has good intentions but they are neglected because of his greed for more gold.

HOWARD—Elegant but modest business suit; a young man of twenty-two; make-up natural; manner unassuming but firm; has a purpose in life above hoarding of gold, and subordinates everything, except his love for Alice, to this purpose.

ALICE—Full evening dress, with display of jewels; sympathetic with Howard's view and loves him.

(McKlusky enters, L., and stands at attention, chin high. Prince follows quickly, large bunch of violets in hand, crossing to center and looking round.)

PRINCE—Vot? Iss she not here to grdreet me?
Vy?

McKLUSKY—(Waving him to chair.) Pray be seated, sir. (Going.) I will inform Mees Kingsley that you have come. (Stops and faces audience.) I am sure she will be sorry, sir. (Starts, L.)

PRINCE—Vot? You inzuldt me! Vot?

McKLUSKY—Indeed, no sir. I say she will be sorry she was not here to grdrdreeet you. (Leaves, L., quickly.)

PRINCE—Ah, ha! I dakes inzulds, anydings, schoost so I dakes de sweet Amerdrican Beauuty Rose mit all her millions. Ha, ha, hahe! Me leetle Prizess, you can keep me vait now vile you are so beau-u-tivol, und vile your pappa has so great big heaps ov GOOLD, mit big bright diamonds stuck in de tops ov him; but ven you have mardried me, und I haf se money pags, vell, den you vill not be so very very beau-u-tivol, und I vill not love you so awful mudch. I vill led you cum pack to your dear Amerdrica und marry dees Carpenter chump—vile I dakes me dear Vilhelmina und sphends de Amerdrican goold in me villa in Southern Italy. Ah! it iss se sweet dream ov me life, und alalready I can taste de sveteness uf it all. Und schoost dink it iss so easy . . . But, vot ef she dell me dat she do not luf me? Vot ef she say again dat she luf dis Carpenter fellow? Subboose I fail in dees gdreat blan? Vot den? Vell, vot den? Ef I haf to I vill make such a pig noise vot dees house never saw pefore—und maybe her pappa vil pay me apout ONE HUNDRET TOUSAND TALLERS to shuttup. Ah, it iss easy. (Advances to front of stage.) Vy should Europe vorry, ven Amerdrican Pappas has blenty goold, und schoost von daughter ter sphend it on. (Enter Alice, L.) Ah, me leetle Prinzess, (Going to her, offers violets. As she takes them, bows low over her hand and kisses it.) Vy do you keep me vait? Vy did you not meet me? Ven YOU show me neglect me heart keels me.

ALICE—Prince Bavari, do not feel that way. I was not expecting you so soon.

PRINCE—Sudch sweet apologies. I forgive you mit all my poor heart und quvite forget de loneliness uv a few moments ago, ven I thought me leetle prin-zess did not care. You do care, don't you, me darling?

(Advances.) O, assure me mit schoost von sweet kees from dose heavenly lips und den I cannot doubt you. (Attempts to kiss her. Alice breaks away, laughing nervously.)

ALICE—Not yet, Prince Bavari. If you are inclined to doubt me, a kiss would make you doubt me more.

PRINCE—Vy do you keep me vait. Do I deserve such punishment at your dear hands? Sweetheart, say you luf me. Lay your golden (or nut brown) head on my aching heardt, und led it zing you to schleep.

ALICE—I'm not sleepy, Prince, and until I am, my head does not need resting anywhere. (Sits on settee.)

PRINCE—(Standing close by.) Den, you do not luf me?

ALICE—I'm afraid I do not.

PRINCE—O, cruel, cruel words. De pierce my yearning heardt like one poisoned ardrow. Vy did you not dell me pefore I gave you my heardt und life; und vile I could still luf someone else?

ALICE—Prince Bavari, I have never encouraged you to believe that I loved you; but I'm sorry, very sorry indeed, if you really care in such a way as to hurt. Can't you forgive me?

PRINCE—O, leetle Drosebud, do not keel me. Dell me you are zhoking. I know you will not be plind to se grdreat sacrifice I have make for you. I come across se barriers of se Orinetal Courts mit se richest royalest blood in me veins—ignoring queens und se heardts of tousands Amerdrican beauties mit dey millions, (kneeling) to you as se von woman in all se world who can make me truly happy. Led me blace you at se head of me Royal Household und see you admired by EMPERORS und KINGs. Say you luf me. Cool me parching lips mit schoost von sweet kees.

ALICE—(Staying him with her hand and rising.) I'm sorry but I cannot give you any such assurance. (Crosses to C.) A kiss is too sweet a thing to be squandered.

PRINCE—Skevandered? Vot iss skevandered?

ALICE—(Laughing.) Well, first let me tell you what a kiss is. Love plants it in the souls of babes . . . Nature transplants it to the garden of

girlhood . . . Devotion calls it to the trembling lips of woman. When it is crushed by its soul-mate and robbed of the sweetness it contains, it becomes a Kiss.

PRINCE—Don't keep me vait. I know what a kees iss. I haf had a tousand.

ALICE—Then you have had a plenty.

PRINCE—Dere iss no blenty undil yours are all gone. (Attempts to kiss her.)

ALICE—if I should kiss you, I suppose you would call it one among a thousand.

PRINCE—No, no. It would be a good start on another tousand.

ALICE—I grant you that it would, and we will leave the subject. How long do you remain in the states?

PRINCE—Undil you have keesed me.

ALICE—Then I advise that you buy a farm, and learn agriculture.

PRINCE—I am not accustomed to being humiliated.

ALICE—That was a compliment, Prince.

PRINCE—Inzults upon inzults! You shall kees me. Me brain is awhirl. Me blood scorches me veins. I vill not be denied. (Seizes her firmly.) Gif me dot kees or I die.

ALICE—STOP!

PRINCE—No, no. I cannot stop undil you have keesed me.

ALICE—Stop, I say, or I'll scream for aid.

(Enter Howard, R.)

PRINCE—No, no, no. I cannot stop.

HOWARD—(Seizes him in collar and roughly jerks him back.) You puppet! How dare you! Explain this ruffian conduct to me or I will break every bone n you. SPEAK!

PRINCE—(Bristling.) Py vot autority you cum here where you not wanted to interfere mit OUR happiness?

HOWARD—By the sovereign authority of a gentleman to go where he pleases to protect American womanhood from the pollution of such touch as yours. (Prince starts as for a gun, and Howard squares himself to knock him down. Alice springs before Howard, pushing him back.)

ALICE—HOWARD! You forget he is Prince Bavari, and my guest.

PRINCE—Yez! Und I vill hear your apologies.

HOWARD—If I have intruded, Alice, I humbly beg pardon. I came here because I must see father at once. They told me at the club that he came here. If he is not here, your father will do.

ALICE—I have not seen Mr. Carpenter, but father is here. I will tell him you have come. (Exit, L.)

PRINCE—(Who has been on L., front, twisting mustache, turns suddenly and misses Alice. Starts out after her.)

PRINCE—Yez. VE vill tell him you haf cum. Und leave se pig Amerdrican bully in zis nice pig droom all py he-self. Hahahahaha. (Going.)

HOWARD—Just a minute, Prince. I wish to speak to you.

PRINCE—(Eyeing him closely with monocle.) Of course you would. A great many people want that honor, but I vill see YOU later, ven ladies are not about. (Going.)

HOWARD—You will see me now. (Prince turns and advances towards Howard.) I am conscious, sir, of the disrespect to the place we are in; but I am much more sensible of the insult you have given me. Now, I am Howard Carpenter—a plain American gentleman—and I presume you are Prince Bavari, of the Austrian nobility. Am I correct?

PRINCE—(Folding his arms.) As to MY identity, you are quvite vell informed.

HOWARD—I am willing that you should ignore what I say concerning myself. It does not matter. But I wish to say to you that I regret the unpleasantness of a few moments ago, AS WELL AS THE CAUSE FOR IT; and before I leave you under this roof with Miss Kinglsey, Prince or Peasant, I exact your promise that it shall not occur again. What have you to say?

PRINCE—(Drawing himself up.) Simbly, dees, ef you dhrive me to tell you, though I did not want to hurt you, Mees KINGSLEY ISS MY AFFIANCED BRIDE.

HOWARD—(Starting suddenly.) NO!

PRINCE—Ha, ha, ha, YEZ. (Enjoys Howard's suffering.) Und ef you are an Amerdrican gentleman, as you are so fond of boasting you are, you vill not intrude yourself further into our happiness.

HOWARD—(Slowly offering hand.) Prince Bavari, I offer you my sincerest apologies, and, and—con-

gratulations. Be good to her, sir, or I swear there are not swords enough in your royal guard to prevent me from strangling you.

PRINCE—Meester Carpenter, you are von noble fellow. Good-night. (Exit, L.)

HOWARD—(Bewildered.) How strange this is! I wonder if it's true that Alice Kingsley—my life-long friend and sympathizer, whom I love as dearly as my strength will let me—could find it in her heart to hurt me like this! Could such as she accept my love and adoration for so long, then when it is impossible for me to forget her, ignore my rightful claim in this manner? Indeed, I wonder if I have come to the end of the golden thread she has woven and interwoven in the fabric of my life almost since it was strung on the loom of Time. (Brightening.) Why, no—there is a mistake, and I shall soon know that I was a coward to doubt her. (Enter Mr. Kingsley, L.)

MR. KINGSLEY—Why, good evening, Howard. (Offers hand.)

HOWARD—Good-evening, Mr. Kingsley.

MR. K.—Glad to see you. (Waves him to chair.)

HOWARD—I'm sorry it is necessary for me to prolong your business hours, for I know you are tired and need rest, but I have exhausted every means to find father and failed.

MR. K.—Apologies are out of order, Howard. I am always ready to talk business. What is it.

HOWARD—I have just returned from Georgia and have some news for you and father which I feel sure will tickle your old, greedy fingers.

MR. K.—There you go again, preaching against GREED. Your father and I make lots of money, and I tell you, boy, it is mighty nice to have more than anybody.

HOWARD—Yes, money is a great power, indeed. I have never had as much as I wanted, or as much as I needed, but if I can drive a good bargain with you and father, I shall soon have a great deal.

MR. K.—That sounds good, Howard. I'm surely glad to see you turning your mind towards more important matters. I know your father will be glad, for he has always wanted you to give up your work amongst the poor and prepare yourself to take charge of the vast fortune you will inherit from him.

HOWARD—Mr. Kingsley, it would be impossible for me to give up the work I have started. I find happiness and contentment in it, and the further I go, the more certain I am that I can never do anything else. I have no plans for the future which do not include a greater effort in this direction.

MR. K.—Howard, you could make a world of money, if you would devote your time to it.

HOWARD—I do make a great deal of money, Mr. Kingsley.

MR. K.—I know you do, but you do not let it accumulate. My boy, that is the secret of it all. Before your money has time to do you any good, you throw it away on some charitable purpose. Unless you take your father's advice and mine, you will never have the satisfaction of seeing your work count for something.

HOWARD—You mean in yours and father's way of thinking, and measuring values.

MR. K.—You will find that we are right, and I sincerely hope it will not be too late.

HOWARD—Maybe so. But until then I shall continue to follow a different purpose. My business here tonight is to raise more money for what you call foolishness. Father will be here as soon as the messenger can find him. I wanted you two together, so that we might settle this matter tonight. (Produces bag of gold nuggets from pocket and pours on table with rattle.) How does that look to you, Mr. Kingsley?

MR. K.—(Showing great elation.) GOLD! For Heaven's sake, Howard Carpenter, where did you find this gold? What does this mean?

HOWARD—(Jokingly.) What will you give me to tell you?

MR. K.—We have paid as high as ONE MILLION DOLLARS for information like this. If there is much more where this came from, and of this quality, we will pay you whatever it is worth. (Enter McKlusky, R., followed by Mr. Carpenter.)

MCKLUSKY—Mr. Carpenter. (Exit, R.)

MR. K.—By George! Carp, Hurrah!

MR. C.—Why, hello, son. When did you get back?

HOWARD—I have just arrived—

MR. K.—And look what he came wagging in.

MR. C.—(Examining nuggets.) GOLD! VALU-

ABLE GOLD! Where on earth did you get this, Howard?

MR. K.—That is what I asked him, but he says there must be some agreement before he will tell.

MR. C.—(In astonishment.) Why, that sounds mighty funny, coming from YOU, HOWARD. I'm truly glad to see you learning the value of gold. What agreement do you want boy? Hurry and name your terms, for we want to know where you found it.

MR. K.—Yes, don't keep us waiting.

HOWARD—The agreement I ask is this: That one-half the profits from working this gold mine, which is situated on MY possessions, be given me to do with as I please.

MR. K.—You say the mine is on YOUR possessions?

HOWARD—I do, sir.

MR. C.—You lucky dog. We agree.

MR. K.—Yes, we accept your terms. Now tell us where it is.

HOWARD—You remember, father, not long ago I begged you out of \$10,000.00, to finish out the amount I needed to build a home for the care of sick babies, who had no home or money of their own, or any one to properly care for them—just little neglected souls fighting circumstances and conditions far too great for their helpless hands?

MR. C.—I don't soon forget giving away \$10,000.00, my boy.

HOWARD—I'm sorry that is a fact. You have given me a great deal of money and permitted me to use my own to promote the happiness of the down-trodden. And I am afraid you have always counted it a bad investment; but in this instance I believe you will find it a good investment FROM YOUR STANDPOINT.

MR. K.—(Pleasantly.) Howard, if you don't come right down to tacks and tell us where this gold came from, we will spank you.

MR. C.—Yes, I will help you, King.

HOWARD—You old misers. Listen, while I pour a golden stream of luck into your eager ears. Down on my mother's mountain land in Northern Georgia, I lately decided to build a beneficent institution to her blessed memory, and remembering how tenderly she loved me and all other babies, I selected an institution for the care of them in her home country. The

work has been begun. Some sand was needed. I went with some laborers to find it. As they spaded it into the wagons, I saw glittering (Mr. K. and Mr. C. show interest) particles, and examined them.

MR. K. AND MR. C.—Yes, yes, GO ON!

HOWARD—It was gold. Above in the streams, those nuggets were found, and further explorations discovered an outcropping vein richer, I believe, far richer, than anything in all your possessions.

MR. K.—What will you take in GOLD for this tract of land.

MR. C.—Yes, name your price. We will buy it outright.

HOWARD—GENTLEMEN! Including you, father. I have told you I was building a monument to my mother on this land. DO YOU THINK YOU COULD BUY IT FROM ME?

MR. C.—We did not mean to put it that way, son.

MR. K.—Indeed, no.

HOWARD—I know you didn't. It is the gold that blinds you to all sense of fairness to the living and the dead. I hope both of you will get your eyes opened and be lifted up to a higher vision plane where you will see something in life that is better than gold. Now, if you agree to my terms, have your engineers ready to go back with me tonight.

MR. C.—Indeed, we accept such a liberal offer. Here, take this ore to our chief chemist and bring us his opinion on it as soon as possible. Bring it back here. We will draw up the agreement and have it ready when you return.

HOWARD—(Laughing.) Remember to make it binding, now. (Exit, R.)

MR. K.—What do you think of that for luck? Why cannot our engineers stumble upon such rich finds?

MR. C.—I cannot understand it. If anybody but Howard Carpenter had brought this wonderful story to me, I should have laughed him down. We have searched the mountains in North Georgia for gold for years. We have found strong indications, but never ore worth working. And now this boy has found it. I do not doubt that it is there in abundance.

MR. K.—Of course it is there. And under the agreement that boy will have money enough to build a wonderful institution. It will make his great hos-

pital here in New York look small. Carp, that boy is a wonder.

MR. C.—Thank you, King. Of course I think so. I have spent my life in piling up a great fortune for him. I have given him every advantage —private tutors, the best universities in the East and abroad, travel and everything his heart could wish. And I fancy he is something more than the average boy.

MR. K.—Indeed he is. He is a noble man, and you should be proud of him.

MR. C.—I am, King. But there is one thing that distresses me. He will not take any interest in our business. We are getting old, King, and there is no one to take charge of our vast interests and continue the work we have spent our lives in. It has often occurred to me that if . . . that we . . . ah, it is a very delicate subject, my old friend.

MR. K.—Speak freely, Carp, my sympathies are with you in all things.

MR. C.—I feel assured of that, but I do not know what you will think of my proposition. We both know from experience that no man is at his best until he is happily married.

MR. K.—I wouldn't dare tell Marguerite anything to the contrary. I know you speak the truth. And I might as well say I know also what you have to propose. It is impossible. My daughter is heart and soul with Howard in this foolish philanthropy business. The best part of her life has been spent in his great hospital. There is never a holiday she does not separate me from a wad of money to aid her in her little pet charities. If they marry, our fortunes would not last through their honeymoon.

MR. C.—Then I understand you—

MR. K.—Yes. I am against this marriage. It is impossible. Our daughter is engaged to Prince Bavari, of Austria. Haven't you seen the evening papers announcing this important social affair?

MR. C.—(Rises and goes front, remaining silent.)

MR. K.—Why are you so silent. Don't you think I deserve to be congratulated on my daughter's great success?

MR. C.—I was thinking of my boy. He will never live down this disappointment.

MR. K.—Such talk is folly, old man. He will now turn his mind to business and be a true Carpenter.

I have done the best I could and am very proud that my daughter is to sit in the Courts of the East. It is costing me pretty high, but the honor to my family is worth it, sir.

MR. C.—Stop. From what you say, I infer that your family would not have been honored by a marriage to my son. Do you fancy I appreciate such insults. I came here to offer you as a husband for your daughter a worthy American gentleman, and you insist on prating about honor to your family.

MR. K.—My old friend, we should not allow this *small* matter to get between us.

MR. C.—SMALL MATTER, INDEED. ANDREW KINGSLEY, you have played me false for the first time in your life. It is humiliating to me to realize that you would give a woman like Alice in marriage to some vagabond prince, who will squander your gold and your daughter, too, rather than to MY son. I sincerely hope it will be a happy marriage, but I am inclined to believe he will rob, divorce and send her back home to you—a lot wiser and more experienced, but far less beautiful and rich. In the meantime I hope my son may grow worthy of her. And since this is the way you feel towards me and mine, I serve notice that our partnership is at an end, sir. When you have finished your plans as to this engagement, you may take up the matter of a dissolution of our business interests. Tell Howard to bring the report to me at home, and do not let him see Alice. It might cheapen her. (Exit, R., mad.)

MR. K.—Ha, ha, ha. Mad. I wonder if HOWARD CARPENTER, SENIOR, thinks I would marry my daughter to his money-wasting fool, rather than to one of the HAPSBURGS? Not much. A few silly tears may scald the bloom from their youthful cheeks for awhile, but it will come back again, and the jewels in Alice's crown be brighter because of them. (Mrs. K., L.)

MRS. K.—Andrew, don't you think you should go in and show your respects to the Prince?

MR. K.—I showed that this afternoon when I agreed to pay off the mortgage on his blooming old castle and settle an annuity of—O, I forget how much. I don't want to see him until I have made more money.

MRS. K.—O, don't worry about what it is costing

us. The honor is worth all of it. (Picking up book.) Just listen to this description of the celebration of a prince's wedding in court. (Reads.) "At these functions the King and Queen, and all members of the royal household,"—now just listen to this part—"INCLUDING the parents of such brides as may be of birth foreign to the blood royal"—that's us—"are dressed as for occasions of state." (Closes book.) O, won't we feel grand. I'm so glad Alice is not going to marry Howard Carpenter, as we thought for a while she would.

MR. K.—Well, you need have no fears about that. His father has been here this evening with a big proposition to unite our fortunes by this very marriage.

MRS. K.—The designing wretch! He has seen the evening papers and thinks he can spoil our plans.

MR. K.—If he undertakes it I will spend my last dollar to defeat him. In this matter I'm determined. Alice shall marry the Prince, or I will disown and drive her into the street.

MRS. K.—It is plain that we must be very firm with her. All girls have to be driven into their best interests, and she is no exception. At first she seemed pleased, but lately she has seemed not to care. If she refuses the Prince it will bring the most humiliating scandal, and all New York will laugh. Andrew, don't let her see Howard Carpenter again. One word from that man would spoil everything. They would marry and the next thing we would know of them they would be members of the Salvation Army in the highest of standing.

MR. K.—(Rising.) Something must be done. He is coming back with some reports, and I must let him in. If not, he will suspect something, and there are not enough police in New York to keep him out.

MRS. K.—Such blunders. Leave him in my hands, I will take care of him.

MR. K.—He ought to be here in short time. Tell him his father has the contracts and left word for him to come home immediately. (Exit, L.)

MRS. K.—I did not spend a fortune traveling the continent looking for a suitable husband for my daughter to have it spoiled by a street Preacher like HOWARD CARPENTER. He prates about truth and honor and contentment worth more than gold.

Now it stands me in hand to test his sincerity. After all, thank goodness, he is a man of honor and will be a gentleman. I must play along this line. What shall it be? I have it. If, when he comes here, he could hear a wedding ceremony being said, and could make him believe it that of Alice, he would hide himself away and nurse his broken heart in silence.

MCKLUSKY—(Entering, R., and followed by Robert.) Mr. Robert Woolsey.

MRS. K.—Ah, Robert, of all people in the world I would rather see you right at this time. You are entirely welcome. McKlusky leave us.

MCKLUSKY—(Bowing low.) Yes, madam. (Exit, R.)

MRS. K.—Robert, could I depend on you in a tight place.

ROBERT—If it has to do with this love affair, I am with you. Mr. Carpenter came home in a terrible rage, and I was so tickled, I just had to run over and learn more about it.

MRS. K.—I knew you would be my friend. Mr. Carpenter has never treated you right. When he married your mother I thought he was going to give you a fair chance. He has not. Howard is in your way. Why don't you get him out?

ROBERT—I have made many a plan to do so, but my nerve fails me in the pinch.

MRS. K.—Had you ever thought that if he and Alice should marry, they would get every penny his father has? Now, I am trying to prevent this very marriage, and need your help. If I can make Howard believe she does not love him, he will leave New York and never return. You will be free to do as you please.

ROBERT—I'll help you do anything.

MRS. K.—He's coming here again in a few moments. Go into that room and when you hear me approach the door begin an old-fashioned ceremony. Make it short and to the point. And when you come to that part that goes, "If any man know a reason, etc.," make it strong.

ROBERT—(Imitating in deep voice.) "Or forever hold his peace."

MRS. K.—Excellent. Just duplicate that and leave the rest with me. (Exit Robert, L.) (Taps bell for McKlusky. Enter McKlusky.) McKlusky, when

Mr. Howard Carpenter returns, show him in here at once. If you let him go elsewhere you shall suffer for it. Use the West entrance and meet him on the drive. Get on guard and do as I say, or the Prince will spit you on his sword. Hurry, I hear someone coming. (Exit, McKlusky, R.) When they get home to their glittering castle, strong arms and glittering armor will prevent any such interference with their happiness. (Enter McKlusky, R., followed by Howard, paper in hand.)

McKLUSKY—Mr. Howard Carpenter.

MRS. K.—I'm glad to see you Howard.

HOWARD—(Holding out paper.) Tell me, is that true?

MRS. K.—Not exactly. The announcement states they are to be married soon, but a late cable advises that important matters of state demand the Prince's attention, and so they are to be married tonight.

HOWARD—MRS. KINGSLEY! Alice to be married TONIGHT?

MRS. K.—Aren't you glad she has caught a nobleman?

HOWARD—May I speak just one word to her?

MRS. K.—O, certainly. But really, we have no time to lose. They are booked for passage on the Tirembic, which sails at midnight, but because you and she have been such dear old friends, I think it would not be right to deny you the pleasure of seeing her before she is Alice Kingsley no more. (Approaches door.)

ROBERT—(Off stage.) Alice Kingsley, do you take this man—

MRS. K.—Too late.

HOWARD—(Advancing.) Let me pass, I will speak.

MRS. K.—Do not make a fool of yourself. (Howard hesitates.)

ROBERT—If any man know a reason why these two should not wed, let him speak now.

HOWARD—(Starts as if to force his way past. Mrs. Kingsley raises hand.)

MRS. K.—MR. CARPENTER. (Howard stops.)

ROBERT—Or forever hold his peace. I pronounce you man and wife.

HOWARD—Or forever hold his peace. (Say this slowly.)

MRS. K.—Good-night, Mr. Carpenter.

HOWARD—Mrs. Kingsley, if you designed this humiliation to crush me you have succeeded far beyond anything you could have hoped. I knew you did not want your daughter to marry me, but I never dreamed that you loved her so little as to barter her away like this in order that your social ambitions might be gratified. Small wonder that you have always ridiculed my efforts to correct some of the damning faults of society, calling me street-preacher, milk-sop and fool. All these things I may be, but so long as wealth creates such wickedness in high places and God gives me the light to see it, you will find me in the vanguard with what little strength I may have, trying to combat it. It is true that you have designed a plan and worked it in the dark to the end that my sweetest contentment is entirely gone. But in doing so you have fired the fagots which shall burn away the rubbish and leave the one purpose of my life pure and strong. I pity you. Good-night. (Exit, R.)

MRS. K.—What a sermon. If Alice should even think of marrying that fanatic, I would never speak to her again.

ROBERT—(Entering L., hurriedly.) O, Mrs. Kingsley, everything is going to the demnitition bow-wows. Alice has ordered the Prince from the house and swears she will never speak to him again. He is raging like a mad bull, and speaks of damages and slander. Go to him at once, or everything is lost. (Enter Prince, followed by Mr. K. Both making gestures, and Prince, L. talking excitedly and crossing to R. Mr. K. stepping L.)

PRINCE—Mine honor spoiled—my fair name made a zhoke for se peasants. Humiliation, disgrace, scandal. You shall pay for dees, Mr. Kingsley. Verdy, verdy dearly.

MRS. K.—O, Prince Bavari, you do not understand Alice. It is the American way to add zest to love affairs.

PRINCE—Dom se Amerdrican way. I do not zest. I vill haf damages to my personal inzhurry. New York shall know, and it vill laugh at you. Heeee.

MRS. K.—O, this will never do. Bring Alice here. She will explain.

ALICE—(At door.) Do not send for me. I am here and will explain. That brute insulted me more than

once. He is hideous. I would not marry him if the propagation of the human race were at stake.

PRINCE—Br-r-r-r-r-r. Vot?

MR. K.—ALICE!

ALICE—Don't stop me, I will speak. As compared to Howard Carpenter that man could walk bolt upright around his ankles as a dwarf goes round a mountain.

MR. K.—You are a fool!

ALICE—Why? Why? Because I will not lay my heart on the alter of your social ambitions and be sold into the bondage of this lascivious wretch? I came near doing it, but thanks to the love that emanates from my heart for another, I am strengthened to defend myself. You have scorned me and hell hath no fury like the hurt I feel. I have no father and mother to defend me. You, who claim to be such bedeck me with these diamonds and pearls until I look like a bawdy and would sacrifice my happiness for the envy of the "400." O, for Heaven's sake, put him out or my heart will burst with rage. (This point must be worked up to in an increasing rage.)

PRINCE—I vill haf ONE HUNNERD TOUSAND TALLERS FOR DEES INSULTS. But ef you pays me dot mudch, I vill let se incidents thrap.

MRS. K.—Pay him, Andrew. We cannot afford to be scandalized.

ALICE—Pay him nothing, father. Order him from the house.

MR. K.—Alice, you shall marry the Prince tonight, or, if not, do not call me father, but leave my house and never let me see your face again.

ALICE—(Pleadingly.) Father! (Mr. K. turns coolly.) Mother! (Kneeling.)

MRS. K.—Will you marry the Prince?

ALICE—Not if it saved (rising) your sinful souls from hell, and brought ten thousand kings and emperors begging at my feet and I could gratify your foolish ambitions by turning them over to beg of you. I expect to reign as queen, but I purpose it shall be in the kingdom of love, the consort of a noble man, whom you now hate, but I prophesy some day you will be glad to have him smile on you.

Father, if I loved you less it would be easier to choose. (Taking off jewels.) I know you too well to try to dissuade you from your determination.

But in truth and honor I cannot do otherwise then. choose the way with less splendor and grandeur, but far more love and happiness. Here are my jewels worth slightly more than the \$100,000.00 damages exacted by the Prince. I take the blame for this regrettable incident, and wish to pay the cost of it. (Hands jewels.) These costly gems would not look well on a working girl in gingham.

Prince Bavari, you will find it an easy matter to find a Princess who would be far more satisfactory than I could ever be. I'm afraid I do not quite appreciate the honor of the title you offer me. (Going L.) I prefer to live in this sweet old land of Liberty, the faithful wife of an American gentleman.

(CURTAIN.)

ACT II.

SCENE—Study, home of Howard Carpenter, Sr.; midnight same day.

STAGE SETTING—Any parlor or plain room, with doors or portieres R. and L. Walls decorated with a few college banners and at least two pictures—one on R. C., one on L. C., turned to wall.

PROPERTIES—Library table or desk in C., end to audience. Chairs on either side. Small table and typewriter. Letter heads, envelopes and letter tray. Shoe for grins.

COSTUMES AND MAKE-UP—All who were in Act I, same. MRS. CARPENTER, elegant kimono, hair powdered to slight gray to represent woman of fifty. MISS ROBINSON, in street suit, with hat and gloves. KLINK, as valet, with heavy side-burns. GRINS, as valet, with gray wig.

(Enter Klink, L., followed by Miss Robinson.)

KLINK—Pray be seated, Madam. I will inform Mr. Howard that you are here. (Going.) You are his private secretary, I believe.

Miss R.—Yes. (Exit Klink, R.) I wonder why

Mr. Carpenter has sent for me at this hour of the night. Some 10,000 words of dictation on some new lecture or book, I suppose. If it were anybody but Mr. Carpenter, I would not work at such unreasonable hours. (Enter Grins, R., elegant shoe on hand and rubbing it with clean cloth.)

GRINS—'Enin', Miss Robinson.

MISS R.—Good evening, Grins.

GRINS—Massar 'Oward 'l be in in er minit.

MISS R.—Thank you. That is a good looking shoe you have there. Why do you wear it on your hand?

GRINS—'Cause I cain't git hit on ma foot.

MISS R.—That's a pretty good reason. By that means you are able to wear a small, stylish gentleman's shoe, when otherwise you could not. Is that it?

GRINS—Yassam. 'Ceptin I wears dis kind uv er shoe jest long ernuf ter git hit spick an span as er Sunday shirt funt, en as shiny as ma face. Massa 'Oward sho' duse like er clean shoe. En I likes ter keep 'em dat way fur him. He's goin' away ternight, en I hopes he'll take me wid him—'cause he said he mought neber cum back any mo'. He sho' am hurt 'bout sumpin'.

MISS R.—Tell me what it is, Grins.

GRINS—I don't know, ma'am. See dat pictur up dar? He cum in er while ergo, en he looked at hit fur er long time, en neber said er word. Den he turned hit roun' right slow lack. En den hit looked ter dis ole nigger lack his eyes wus wet. (Miss R. turns picture enough to see it.)

MISS R.—ALICE KINGSLEY! Have you been faithless? He loved you in such a way he cannot soon forget. (Enter Howard, R., affecting light-heartedness.)

HOWARD—This is either a very late or a very early start for a day's work, isn't it, Miss Robinson?

MISS R.—The latest, or the earliest, I remember to have made.

HOWARD—Yes, I know it is an unreasonable hour, and I deeply appreciate your kindness to come. I am leaving New York tonight, and just when I shall return is very indefinite. Maybe never.

MISS R.—(Waits silently.)

HOWARD—Miss Robinson, my heart is broken. My future, which has always spread out before me a

beautiful panorama of happiness, has suddenly been overcast with an ominous cloud of infidelity. It is more than I can bear alone. I have no sister to go to. My mother is dead, and father doesn't care. So I come to you for advice and help.

MISS R.—It is a great compliment and if I can aid you, Mr. Carpenter, I shall be happy.

HOWARD—I want a woman's view and estimate of love. Can a woman love and ever forget it?

MISS R.—A true woman?

HOWARD—(Thinks.) Yes.

MISS R.—No. Except sometimes long enough to renew her strength to love more and better.

HOWARD—That would seem to hold out some hope, and my hungry heart cries out for it. Yet I know it cannot be.

MISS R.—Mr. Carpenter, I can tell you from an experience much fuller than the world knows anything about that love is the strongest power in the world, and never goes unrequited. The way may often seem rugged with no stars to guide, yet the end comes and with it love's reward.

HOWARD—Thank you, my friend, for your comforting sympathy. I shall face it with what strength I have; and when I have forgotten, I shall return and we will work together again. In the meantime, I will ask that you look after the proofs of my last book. I will give you an order on the publishers so that they will deliver to you the proofs and accept your O. K. on them. Have you a note book handy? I will give you the dictation. (Miss R. opens note book and picks up pencil.) "Merrill & Co., City. I shall be out of the city for some time and have arranged with my private secretary, Miss Robinson, the bearer hereof, to read and approve the proofs shortly to come from your press. Please consult with her as you would with me and accept her word as final in all matters pertaining to my business." (Takes up letter head.) I will sign my name here on this letter head, giving room for the order. So that you need not trouble to transcribe the order tonight. Tomorrow you can write that order above my signature. You see, I have the utmost confidence in your sincerity as well as your ability.

MISS R.—(Rising.) I shall try very hard to merit both.

HOWARD—Thank you a thousand times for coming tonight, and take good care of yourself. Good-bye
(Offers hand.)

MISS R.—Good-bye, Mr. Carpenter. My sympathies are with you.

HOWARD—Thank you. (Exit, Miss R., L.) (Grins enters, R., shoe in hand.) Grins, have you finished packing?

GRINS—Putty nigh. Dat Ishmans wants ter know does yer want ter take yer Otty-mobile wid yer.

HOWARD—Yes. I want it started at once. Tell him to send the Roadster.

GRINS—Yassar. Massar 'Oward, I'se gwine ter be powerful lonesome here widout yer. I'se got de blues already.

HOWARD—What gave you the blues, Grins?

GRINS—I don't know, sah, unless it war missin' dat shinin' face up dar. (Points to picture.) Don't yer want me ter take hit down en pack hit up so'se you kin take hit wid yer? (Howard turns and looks at picture.)

HOWARD—Yes, I want you to, but you must not. Fate has turned that picture and you and I must let it remain so.

GRINS—Massar 'Oward, whut am fate?

HOWARD—(Slowly turning back and sits on desk in center. Grins remains solemn and motionless.—) Fate? Why, my faithful old friend, fate is that unavoidable destiny that stalks the earth hand in hand with happiness, and sometimes leads it headlong to destruction. It is the canker worm which steals into the fairest rose and eats its heart away—then laughs to see her fair petals wither and fall. Fate is the biting frost which drives the bloom from the cheek of the peach and makes want where plenty was. Fate is the wintry wind that freezes the blood in the human heart and destroys its fondest hopes and purposes.

GRINS—Ain't dar no way er tall ter dodge hit?

HOWARD—None. (Enter Mr. Carpenter, L.) When we think we are secure we fall. Today I loved life and its promises. To live was glorious. Tonight I feel the hoary frost of fate on my head. It chills every drop of blood in me and makes me wish I had never been.

MR. C.—(Advancing and placing hand on Howard's

shoulder. Exit Grins, R., slowly.) Howard, my boy, I am sorry for you.

HOWARD—Father, if I had not loved to the exclusion of everything God has created, it would be easier for me to give back to her the things that are hers. To give her all that is hers would make me a bankrupt, indeed; for there is not a good thing about me she did not give. My highest appreciation for the beautiful in art, literature and music came through her influence. My hatred for the low and vulgar came only through seeing the lack of them in her. She has been faithless, and it crushes me but yet I love her. My life is hers, and thank heaven I feel no blame for her.

MR. C.—She does not deserve such devotion.

HOWARD—Stop, father! Do not speak unkindly of her.

MR. C.—I beg your pardon, son. I know she is not to blame. The sin is at her father's door. Forget her, Howard, and let this be the means of turning your attention to my business. From this day on my relations with Andrew Kingsley are at an end, and I need you.

HOWARD—Father! You don't mean—

MR. C.—Do you think I would associate with a man who does not regard my family as worthy of his own? The Carpenters, my son, have made good to an enviable degree for generations, and I want you to join me now and prepare yourself to continue the family prestige.

HOWARD—Father, I have but one ambition, and that is to add to the fame and glory of the name of Carpenter. But it is in a different line of endeavor to yours and the generations that have gone. I do not seem to care for the glamor and splendor of the society of the rich. My heart leads me past the castle with its gaiety, cut glass and old wines, to the icy alleys and hovels where the unfortunate and improvident are. I cannot get away from the faith that these are my brethren.

MR. C.—That is a noble and praiseworthy sentiment, my boy, but I do not see why you should give it all your time and means.

HOWARD—Indeed, it is strange. I cannot quite understand it myself. But it is true, nevertheless, that I find my greatest happiness in gathering a little

frozen, hungry, neglected boy or girl under my big, warm overcoat, and assuring him that I am his friend. I believe your old heart would feel a strange sensation if you could watch the nurses bring from under the dirt and grime of a city's neglect a fair youth with love and gratitude overflowing his heart as he experiences for the first time in his life the comfort of clean nighties and a well-fed stomach. Then, father, when he has been tucked away in a cozy little bed, and for the first time in his life sleeps in comfort, to go with me and look down on him and feel in your heart what is meant by "In as much as ye did it unto the least of these, my brethren, ye did it unto me." Do not ask me to give it up. If in the wreckage Alice has made, I can still feel determined to go ahead, I beg you not to hinder. Let me forget that she has been the balancing power in my life. (Turning to pictures.) Between these two pictures I have worked and dreamed. The dynamo that drove me was the combined influences of these two good women—my mother and my sweetheart. She (indicating Alice) has taken herself away. She (indicating his mother) was taken long ago. Her memory is sweet and powerful and bears me up in this dark hour to be a man. She was pure and good and kind, and loved you and me I know. And down in Georgia, where the birds sing as nowhere else in all the world—where you found, woed and won her—I purpose to build such a memorial to her blessed memory as will proclaim to all earth in accents fit only for the tongues of angels a mother's undying love for her babe. Father, I am going to the end of my strength. Won't you join me?

MR. C.—(Offering hand.) My boy, \$100,000,000.00 and a father's sympathetic heart are behind you.

HOWARD—Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! I'm going tonight. (Enter Grins.) Grins, do you want to go with me?

GRINS—Lawd, yes.

HOWADR—Do you think yo u could learn to run a car?

GRINS—(Imitating a car, and going R.) I'll git ma duds. (Exit.)

HOWARD—We'll make it, alright. Good-bye.

MR. C.—Good-bye. (Exit, Howard, R.) He'll want to take that old negro to heaven with him.

(Bitterly.) Andrew Kingsley shall pay dearly for this.

MRS. C.—(Entering.) Howard, why is everything so upset here tonight? Must Alice Kingsley's marriage cause such a commotion that no one can sleep? Howard should have been paying some attention to her, instead of forever monkeying with his rotten charity.

MR. C.—Elizabeth, if that is the way you feel towards my son, I ask that you do not express yourself tonight—or ever.

MRS. C.—I do not see why you resent the truth so sharply. If my boy had got into such a muddle you would say he was a fool. But for some strange reason, you always pet Howard and condemn my son.

MR. C.—(Going L.) We are not going to open this lengthy argument at this late hour. I have done more for Robert than he deserves, because he is your son, and you are my wife. But since you insist on driving me to it, I say again, that until he stops drinking, gambling and disgracing all of us with his disgraceful associations with the scum of the earth, I am done with him. If he wants to be a man, I will give him every advantage. But until then, nothing. Good-night. (Exit, L.)

MRS. C.—It is not right that Howard should have everything and my son only \$300 a month to spend. I know he dissipates, but he will quit that some day. (Working to extreme right.) If he had Howard's chances to make money, he would soon be rich. (Enter Robert and Prince, L., Mrs. C. is not seen by them.)

ROBERT—Shhh. These are his WORKROOMS, and when he is in the city he stays here or monkeys with the poor devils in the gutter.

PRINCE—Vot a strange yellow. It iss a grdreat pity to kill him. But ef Mees Kingsley tell him all, he vill sstrangle me. He said as mudch, en I believe him.

ROBERT—She will never have the pleasure of telling him anything. (Sees his mother.) Shhh. Step into the next room and wait until I call you. (Exit Prince, L.) (Feigning drunk.) Musher, hic, are yer goin' ter sthay up, hic, all night, hic, in celebration er dish broken heart?

MRS. C.—(Going to him.) Oh! my boy, my boy!
I heard what you said. Promise me you will do nothing to harm Howard.

ROBERT—Alzhright. I promish.

MRS. C.—Who was that with you?

ROBERT—Hic, zhat was my friend. He's gone home. Now, you run along to bed like er good girl.

MRS. C.—Come and let me put you to bed.

ROBERT—I'm alzhright, hic, not drunk, hic, hjest drinkin'.

MRS. C.—I'm going and pray that you will be a man. (Going.)

ROBERT—I'm a purty good man, ain't I? (Exit Mrs. C., L.) Poor mother. I was hard to hurt her like that. But she knows I never come to these rooms for any good purpose. I had to fool her so that she would leave me and not believe what she heard. (Enter Prince.)

PRINCE—Hey, vott? Vy didn't you send for me?

ROBERT—Why didn't you give me time?

PRINCE—Pecause it occurred to me dot ef zis Carpenter fellow find me in hes house dot I would vant to pe glose ter zumpody.

ROBERT—(Looking R.) There goes his car. The room is ours. What plan have you to suggest?

PRINCE—in ze first blaze ve had better blan not to haf dot car cum pack vid him.

ROBERT—There is no danger of that. He is off for Georgia to nurse his broken heart in silence and try to forget.

PRINCE—I habe 'e forgeds dot I did not ged se chance ter be good to her, und dot pecause her pappa vus a dom fool, I scharged him one hunnert tousand tallers for it.

ROBERT—if we do not follow him to the mountains and leave him there food for the crows, he will learn the truth. Then he will never stop until he has pummeled you into jelly.

PRINCE—(Nervously.) Vot? You tdrink zo? I gif you dis hunnert tousand ef you keel him. Dot iss VEN you haf keeled him. (Enter Klink. Prince thinks it is Howard and rushes across stage. Br-r-r-r-r. Gott und Himmel, Meester Carpenter. I'm here to apologize. (Turns.) Ah-h-h-h.

ROBERT—Be quiet, you fool. Hic, you are dhrunk.

PRINCE—Yez, hic, dhrunk, und haf no dhrink

to offer you, hic. (Robert and Prince, ad lib.)

KLINK—(Advancing and placing hand on Robert's shoulder.) Yez mither hordered me ter put yez ter bed, sir.

ROBERT—Hic, ter hic'l wid yer, yer high chin Irishman, hic. Ain't I purty ernuf ter run my own bushness?

KLINK—I'm sorry, sir, but I have me horders, sir.

PRINCE—(Producing coins.) Dell hes musher, hic, you haf put him ter bet, und dot he schleeps.

KLINK—(Bowing low as he takes money.) Depend on me, sir. (Exit, L.)

ROBERT—That is more money than Klink has had in a year. We are wasting time, Prince. Somewhere in this room there is a bag of gold nuggets worth \$1,000.00. I heard Mr. Carpenter tell mother Howard brought it back with him. (Looks in desk.)

PRINCE—Pag uv GOOLD. Vare?

ROBERT—It may be in his room. (Goes R.) I will look there.

PRINCE—(Looks round nervously when alone. Goes after Robert.) Ve vill bot look togedder. I fear you might haf ter fight him alone. (Re-enter Robert as Prince is about to exit.)

ROBERT—It must be in his desk. (Enter Klink, L.)

KLINK—A letter which de messenger said was to be given to no one but Meester 'Oward Carpenter, Jr. The messenger arrived in an ambulance from Mr. 'Oward's 'ospital and is waiting for an answer. I thought it might be himportant so brought it up.

ROBERT—Let me see it.

KLINK—(Drawing back.) Pardon me, sir, but it is for no one but Meester 'Oward Carpenter, Jr.

ROBERT—(Angrily.) Give me that letter, Klink.

PRINCE—(Producing roll of bills and peeling off one for Klink.) Ah-h-h. Vait, Meester Woolsey. (Hands bill.) Gif me dot leetle note.

KLINK—(Hands letter.) O, dot is different. Now I am sure yez will give it to Meester Carpenter. (Prince hands letter to Robert who opens and reads.)

ROBERT—(Reading.) "Dear Howard. You have been deceived." (Prince hands Klink another bill.)

PRINCE—(To Klink.) He vas not deceived.

ROBERT—(Reading on.) "Do not believe anything you hear, but come to me at once. I am at your

hospital. Your private ambulance is waiting at your door to bring you. Yours faithfully, Alice."

PRINCE—(Knees trembling.) Gott und Himmel! Vot iss am-bu-lance? I feel myself slips.

ROBERT—Hold your nerve, Prince.

PRINCE—(Trembling more.) I got him.

ROBERT—Something must be done.

PRINCE—Mebbe ef we get dhrunk ergin it vill pe petter. Vot?

ROBERT—(Goes to desk and sits.) This letter must be answered or the game is up. It will never do for Howard Carpenter to learn that she loves him. He must never know it; for if these two marry, this estate passes from my hands forever. I helped you rob old man Kingsley, now you are going to help me rob Howard of the Carpenter millions.

KLINK—The messenger is waiting.

PRINCE—(Hurriedly gives another bill.) No, he iss not vaiting.

ROBERT—(Discovers Howard's signature.) WHAT! His genuine signature on a blank page. Ye gods! I'm in luck.

PRINCE—Vot?

ROBERT—(Holding up page.) Ha, ha, ha. How careless of him. Above that name I can write an order on the Chemical National and get any amount of money, for the impostor has unlimited credit. How much shall I write?

PRINCE—Go ze limit.

ROBERT—Klink, leave us.

KLINK—If yez need me I will help.

ROBERT—Wait. May I depend on you, Klink, in a very tight place?

KLINK—The tighter, the better I would like it, sir.

ROBERT—Then stay. Prince Bavari, this paper is worth a small fortune in itself if I use it to get money; but it is worth \$100,000,000.00 to me if I can make Alice Kingsley believe he despises her.

PRINCE—How? Dot vill not fill your pockets.

ROBERT—You don't understand. When she gets the letter I am going to write above that name, she will leave him to pursue his work in Georgia. I will follow him down there and he will not follow me away. There is no other heir to this estate.

PRINCE—Meester Woolsey, you vould make a good Prince.

ROBERT—Thanks, for the insult. Klink, can you imitate his writing?

KLINK—I write very poorly, except on the typewriter.

ROBERT—By George! That makes it easy. There is a typewriter. Fall to it. It will seem more to her that he is in earnest. (Klink sits at typewriter.) Here, insert this sheet so as to make a letter of about twelve lines come down to the wonderful cognomen of **HOWARD CARPENTER, Jr.** (Klink inserts letter.) (Dictating.) "Miss Alice Kingsley, care Howard Carpenter, Jr., Hospital for the Poor, City:" It is going to take the whole durn page for the address, isn't it?

KLINK—I allowed for the address, sir.

ROBERT—(Dictating.) "Answering your letter just received by special messenger, I am leaving the city tonight and do not care to see you before I go. I think you should be satisfied with your perfidy and not seek to drag me further into the muck of your recent and odious flirtation with your great Austrian Prince."

PRINCE—(Hands Klink another bill.) He iss dalkin' 'bout dot udder fellow.

ROBERT—(Dictating.) "My father desires me to state that he respectfully requests that you do not house yourself in my institution, and in this I heartily concur. Yours very truly," How about the signature?

KLINK—(Looking.) Just right where it is, sir. (Takes letter out and addresses an envelope.)

ROBERT—(Looks letter over.) Purty good stuff, if I did reel it off. (Places letter in envelope given him by Klink.) Here, give this to the waiting messenger. It will soothe the maiden's pain, and permit me to accomplish my purpose. (Exit Klink, L.)

PRINCE—Meester Woolsey, I believe zis Amerdrican game iss too fast for me, en I vants ter pe pack on ze udder side uv ze pig plue pond ven Meester Carpenter, Jr., chokes ze stuffin' out uv you on ze mountains in North Georgia, en den looks roun' for ze Prince.

ROBERT—And so you are showing the yellow, are you? Do you think I am going to help you steal \$100,000.00 and let you take all of it back home with you?

PRINCE—Oh, ah, Meester Voolsey. How mu dch uv dot hunnert tousand must I give you?

ROBERT—Ten thousand will do me for a while.

PRINCE—(Pays him.) I gladly gif you dot mudch. En now I leaf you. Good-night. (Starts L., returns.) O, I say, Meester Woolsey, are you sure dot AM-BU-LANCE is not yet alalready vaiting?

ROBERT—if it is I advise you to run like.

PRINCE—Humiliation, disgraces, but ef I haf ter I pet its vell done. (Turns up trousers, and pulls hat down.) Here's good-night to your dear Amer-drica. (Starts L., enter Klink.)

KLINK—(Excitedly.) The messenger gave the letter to a lady in the ambulance who opened and read it. Then she sprang out and demanded to come in and see Meester 'Oward. I promised her I would arrange an audience if she would wait at the door. What shall I do, sir?

ROBERT—It is Alice Kingsley. Admit her. I will make the most of it. (Exit Klink, L.) Prince, this game is just warming up. If you fail me I shall expose your blackmail and put you behind the bars.

PRINCE—Vot must I do?

ROBERT—Whatever I tell you. Stand over there, (indicating R.,) She is coming. (Enter Alice in heavy cloak.) Why good evening, Miss Kingsley.

ALICE—Robert, I must see Howard at once. Won't you be kind enough to tell him?

ROBERT—I will see if he is in his rooms, though I am sure he will not care to see you. (Goes right.)

SUOBERT—(To Prince.) Drive her away with in-
AL (Exit, R.)

PRINCE—Zis iss quvite a pleasant surprise.

ALICE—(Starting.) You! Why are you HERE?

PRINCE—Ef you gif me dot good long sweet kees, I vill dell you (Advances close.)

ALICE—stand back and do not touch me. It is enough to haev fallen into your presence again.

PRINCE—Dremember, my dear, ve are not zis time in your pappa's house.

ALICE—(Frightened.) Oh, Howard! Why don't you protect me from this brute? (Enter Robert, R.)

ROBERT—(Smiling.) I'm sorry, Miss Kingsley, but Mr. Howard refuses to see you, and asks that you leave the house.

ALICE—(Lost.) Then this letter is final. (Starts

left.) Robert, I cannot bear to have him deceived like this. Tell him if he will not come here to see me, I shall go to him.

ROBERT—Would you thrust yourself into his bedroom like that? You seem to know where it is.

ALICE—(Infuriated.) You coward! If only Howard could hear you say that!

ROBERT—Do not be offended because you are caught in his rooms at midnight when you thought the house was asleep.

PRINCE—Ah-h-h. I see. Zis Carpenter chump iss some slicks.

ALICE—Robert Woolsey, these insults shall be choked back down your throat. I am at your mercy now, for I am alone. You would not dare treat me this way if Howard were in this house. (Tries to open door and finds it locked). What does this mean?

PRINCE—It means dot I get dot kees.

ALICE—It doesn't matter much, now, since Howard doesn't care; but not until these lips are cold shall they be polluted by yours. The time will come when truth shall come into its own, and if that time finds me alive, it shall also find me unspotted and worthy. You dare not touch me. (Tap on door, L.)

ROBERT—(Opens door quickly and admits Mr. C.)

MR. C.—(Sees Alice.) What are you doing here? (To Prince.) And you? Explain this Robert.

ROBERT—Why, ah, ah, er, Mr. Carpenter, I'm very sorry it has occurred.

MR. C.—What has occurred?

ROBERT—Why finding this woman in your son's rooms at midnight after she has married the Prince.

PRINCE—Yez. I wish you would make her go hom mit me.

ALICE—Oh! Mr. Carpenter, they lie. Protect me. I was driven from my father's house because I loved your son. I'm innocent of any wrong.

ROBERT—She is here, isn't she?

PRINCE—I did not bring her. She slipped out of bed and came.

ALICE—Speak, MR. CARPENTER. Choke their lying throats, and if I do not vindicate myself I will be your bond slave forever.

MR. C.—Alice, the proof is against you.

ALICE—(Pleadingly.) MR. CARPENTER!

MR. C.—I will send you wherever you wish to go

if you desire me to, provided you will make me a solemn promise.

ALICE—Thank you. I will promise. Give me safe conduct to Howard's ambulance, which is waiting at the front door.

ROBERT—Isn't it strange that this ambulance is waiting at your front door?

MR. C.—Stop, Robert. I need no further proof. Howard has deceived me. Alice, if you give your promise that you will never attempt to see my son again, or if he tries to see you, refuse him, I will protect you from any and all other unfavorable circumstances, for I am sure this vagabond Prince will bring you to want.

ALICE—I am in the hands of fiends and it is your duty to defend me, Mr. Carpenter. If you cannot read my innocence in my eyes, and choose to be mislead by these monsters, who would destroy the honor I have kept so far above reproach in order better to merit the love of your son, I can but accept the shame and disgrace. Leave me with them, or join them in my destruction, for there is no power in heaven or earth great enough to exact my promise that your son shall not know from my lips that I love him.

PRINCE—Are you ready to go home mit me?

MR. C.—If she IS your wife, and if she is guilty of improper love for my son, she is not yet mean enough to be subject to your orders. GO! (Exit Prince, L.) Robert, send that ambulance back to the hospital and order my car for immediate service. (Exit Robert, L.)

ALICE—Mr. Carpenter, you are noble to defend me in this manner.

MR. C.—I cannot quite believe you are all bad, Alice, so I am merely giving you the benefit of the doubt. Your father tried to humiliate me, but I'm going to save him, until I can get Howard back to New York and learn the truth. If you are guilty, both of you shall fall together.

ALICE—And if we are innocent—will you promise that we shall both RISE together?

MR. C.—As high as my love and wealth can raise you.

ALICE—I ask no more. (Enter Robert, L.)

ROBERT—The car is waiting. Do you wish me to go with her.

MR. C.—She is going to a house of correction, Robert, but her escort shall be a gentleman. (Going with Alice, L.) I will see you when I return. (Exit with Alice, L.)

ROBERT—And so another fine scheme goes up in smoke! It's a pretty hard matter to find mud thick enough to hide entirely a virtuous heart.

But if you think I'm going to be defeated like this, you are mistaken. (Starts L.) I do not care to answer the old man's questions, so here goes for North Georgia. (Exit on falling curtain.)

(CURTAIN.)

ACT III.

SCENE—Mountains, North Georgia, three days later.

STAGE SETTING—Any mountain or woodland scene. Boxes piled up and covered with gray or brown cloth to imitate rocks. Leaves scattered over floor will add.

PROPERTIES—Gun for Bill. Kodak for Howard. Fishing pole and bucket for Mammy. Revolver for Robert.

COSTUMES AND MAKE-UP—Nell as mountain girl of eighteen. Mammy as a fat old Southern mammy. Bill as mountaineer. Howard in cap and gloves, with automobile coat. Grins in plain black suit, and soft hat.

(On curtain Mammy rushes out from L., carrying fishing pole and bucket, and conducting herself as if scared of automobile, which is heard off L. Nell follows, laughing heartily.)

MAMMY—Lawd save us, honey. Come on heah, en stop dat laffin'—dis ain't no time fur foolishness.

NELL—Why, Mammy, that thing ain't er goin' ter hurt yer. Them things is otto-mo-biles. I been

hearen' 'bout them things. They jest glide erlong nice lack. En—

MAMMY—Now honey, you done gone clean crazy. You try dat GLIDIN' business en you will wake up en fine' yo'se'f in hebben.

NELL—Well, that would be nice.

MAMMY—Not fur dis nigger. When I goes I wants I wants ter go on de charriott. St Peter wouldn't rickernize sich er thing as dat. En besides, when I rides, I wants ter see some hosses in funt. Dey's done en gone roun' de mountain, en I hopes dey'l stay. Who am dat, anyhow, scootin' en cavortin' roun' heah?

NELL—Why, it's Mr. Carpenter, what's buildin' the big place here in the mountains.

MAMMY—Well, den, maybe he got sense ernuf ter keep the fool thing straight.

NELL—Say, Mammy, he brought a fine lookin' nigger back with him.

MAMMY—Wus dat er nigger ridin' in dat car? He ought ter be ershamed er heself. I thought niggers had more sense den dat.

NELL—I think it would be nice ter ride in er car with Mr. Carpenter.

MAMMY—Honey, why done yer set up ter Mr. Carpenter? You'se purty ernuf. Mebbe he'd take er lackin' ter yer, en you'd marry him, en take me ter NOO YAWK ter lib wid yer. Now, I'se talkin' sense.

NELL—Oh, no, Mammy. Mr. Carpenter is the nicest man I ever saw, but he has a sweetheart. He tole me so. En he loves her lots.

MAMMY—Oh, er cose. But smart folks lack him changes der minds, honey.

NELL—Mammy, I'm not fit to be his wife. His people would laugh at me, en I'd be miserable. Besides, I love Bill. He is of my people and and will make me happy. Bill is goin' ter work fur Mr. Carpenter en get er big salary. En say, Mammy, Bill en me is goin' ter git married.

MAMMY—Dat's right, honey, stick ter de folks yer wus raised wid. I'd jest as soon lib wid yer en Mr. Bill anyhow. I'l wash de close, en make de bestest biscuits, en, en, look atter de—(Folds arms and moves them as if holding a baby, crooning "By-o-baby buntin'") Shut up, yo' lil rascal. (Nell hides her

face in her arms embarrassed.) Dar, now, honey chile Ole black Mammy didn't mean no harm. (Enter Bill, L., gun on shoulder.) O Lawd, he dun heard it all.

BILL—(Pleasantly.) Hello, Nell and Mammy. How in Sam Hill do yer 'spect me ter kill any squirls en you two making so much noise?

MAMMY—I wus jest tellin' her—(Nell stops her mouth with hand.) I ain't er goin' ter tell him honey.

NELL—(Reaching for Bill's gun, and laughing.) If you do I'll shoot you.

BILL—What is it, Mammy? I bet you two have been planning a joke on me.

NELL—Say a word, ef you dare.

MAMMY—I ain't er goin' ter tell him nuffin'. He will know later en soon ernuf. Yes, it war er joke, Mr. Bill, but we all got ter git uset to dem. (Picks up bucket and pole and starts R.) I'se tired monekyin' wid you chil'n. I'se goin' on fishin'. (Leaves stage singing "Swing Low Sweet Chariot," (walking slowly, and when leaving change to "By-o-baby Buntin'," looking back over shoulder.)

BILL—Don't mind her, Nell. She don't mean no harm.

NELL—Bill, I'm so happy.

BILL—You are the best little girl in the world, Nell. You make me want ter be a bigger fellow. (They sit on rocks, Nell at his feet.)

NELL—I know you love me, Bill.

BILL—Jest all my heart will let me. Little girl, Mr. Carpenter says as how he wants me ter be his foreman on the big place here, en says he will give me er HUNDERD DOLLARS ER MONTH.

NELL—Mr. Carpenter is er kind man, ain't he?

BILL—I never seen anybody jest lack him. He's rich en edicated, but he makes hisself jest lack us mountain folks. En he lacks you, too, Nell. He tole me you wus the right kind. En when I tole him you wus my gal, he grabbed me by the hand en said as how he wanted ter con, con, con, glomerate me, or sumpin' lack tat. En he said when a man can claim a pure woman's love, he otter be happy. When he said hit he looked sad en hurt, lack he had knowed some gal who didn't give him a pure love, sich as you are givin' me, Nell. En I'm so rough, en pore, en uneducated.

NELL—You are good en true, Bill, en hit counts with me fer more'n money. Mr. Carpenter read me er book one time, which said as how there wus two kinds of love—money-love en heart-love. Mine is heart-love, Bill.

BILL—I know you love me, little girl. En we ought ter git married. This mornin' Mr. Carpenter give the big boss er paper en said hit was a plan for the foreman's cottage. Hit's goin' ter be built out er stone en heated from the big buildin'. Hit's fur me and you, Nell. Will you marry me? (Nell is silent, head bowed on Bill's knee.) Don't you want ter, Nell? Don't yer love good ernuf? Yer love these old hills en streams—en the little fishes that play in them. Yer love the little flowers that grow way up on the rocks, en can clam and get em lack er squirrel. Yer love the leaves when frost has turned them all sorts er colors, some yallow, en green en gold, en they make er carpet fur yer ramblin feet. Yer love the mornin' when the birds are singin', en evenin', when the stars are shinin', en I'll keep you here to love em still. (Lifts her face.) I cain't read er book, but deep in yer tear-filled eyes I kin read more'n books kin hold. You ain't never kissed me, Nell. How much longer have I got ter wait? (Nell offers a kiss, which, of course, he takes. Enter Mammy singing "By-o-baby Buntin'", and pretending she does not see them.)

MAMMY—Ain't yer shamed!

BILL—Mammy, Nell is goin' ter marry me.

MAMMY—Yer ain't tole me nuffin'. She done tole me hersef. (Car is heard off L.) Lawd, dar cum dat umbilicus ergin.

BILL—Hit's Mr. Carpenter en he's comin' heah.

MAMMY—Doggone ef he ain't. He done cum. (Enter Howard and Grins.)

HOWARD—Why, hello, Nell and Bill. (All shake hands, except Mammy and Grins.)

NELL—Howdy, Mr. Carpenter. Glad ter see you back.

HOWARD—Glad to be back, thank you. And there is Mammy.

MAMMY—(On extreme R., draws herself up.) I thought yer'd see ME.

HOWARD—Why, of course, I'd see you. I've been right hungry for some of your good Southern biscuits.

MAMMY—I jest guess I kin make de bestest biscuits er any nigger in dis neck er de woods.

NELL—You mustn’t brag on yerself, Mammy.

MAMMY—I ain’t er braggin’. Jest tellin’ de truf.

BILL—That’s right. Stick to it, Mammy.

HOWARD—Grins, come round here. I want you to meet Aunt Laura. Aunt Laura, this is Grins. I hope you will be friends.

GRINS—(Who has been standing back, hat in hand.) Glad ter meet you, Miss Laura. (Bows low.)

MAMMY—Yer ought ter be.

GRINS—Well, ef I is, dat’s alright, ain’t it?

MAMMY—Er cose. Cum ober heah en sit wid me, Mr. Grins. (Sits on rock and makes room for Grins.)

GRINS—Massar ’Oward. I’se er gwine. (Crosses over and sits close beside her.)

HOWARD—(Taking kodak in hand.) That would make a fine picture.

MAMMY—Ho, ho, hold on, dar, Massar ’Oward. What you doin’?

HOWARD—Why, I want a picture of you and Grins sitting there on the rock. You don’t care, do you?

MAMMY—Dat pends as ter how yer gits hit. What am dat thing you pintin’ at me?

HOWARD—This is a Kodak. There is a sensitized plate—

MAMMY—Don’t pint dat sensible plate at me, EF YOU PLEASE.

GRINS—Why, hit won’t hurt you, Miss Laura.

HOWARD—You just look right in here, and I expose you to the plate and—

MAMMY—You jest ’swell put dat thing back whar you got hit, fur I ain’t er goin’ ter be SPOSED.

GRINS—Yes, do, Miss Laura. I wants er pictur er I en you, ter take back ter Noo York wid me.

MAMMY—Well, den. But be careful, Massar ’Oward.

HOWARD—Now, look pleasant, while I—

MAMMY—Ho, ho, hold on, dar ergin. I’se willin’, but dar is er question I wants ter ax. Is my ole man er goin’ ter see how close I’se er sittin’ to dis nigger? (Grins springs away.)

GRINS—What ole man?

HOWARD—No, I won’t let him see it.

MAMMY—Well, den. Cum on back heah, Mr. Grins.

HOWARD—Now be right still a minute. Ah—thank you. I have it.

MAMMY—Hit didn't hurt er bit. But ef my ole man eber sees dat pictur, dar'l be sumpin' doin' in de fur business, I bound yer.

HOWARD—I am on my way down to the falls, Bill. If you and Nell will go with me, I will show you some real gold.

BILL—I must go back up to the buildin' er minit. You en Nell go ahead, en I'll come on later. (Exit, L.)

HOWARD—Grins, stay here with Mammy, we will be back in a few minutes.

GRINS—Alright, Massar 'Oward. You go hade. I'se got all de gold right heah I'se er lookin' fur. (Exit Howard and Nell, R.)

GRINS—Miss Laura, I thinks you goin' ter lack me fine.

MAMMY—I don't know bout dat. I tole yer I had er ole man.

GRINS—Dat's right. Yer ain't er goin' ter lack me.

MAMMY—I don't know 'bout dat. Whar duse yer lib?

GRINS—in New York, wid Massar 'Oward. I'se his man en waits on him.

MAMMY—Any colored ladies 'bout.

GRINS—NO-O-O-O.

MAMMY—Well den. (Sees kodak which Howard left.) Look out dar. Massar 'Oward lef' dat pictur machine. You better put dat thing under yo' coat.

GRINS—(Taking it up.) I knows how ter wuk it. Let me take yer pictur.

MAMMY—You'se foolish nigger, ef yer thinks I'se guin ter risk you wid dat thing.

GRINS—Oh, I knows all about her. I'se got ter leab yer sometime, en I wants er pictur ter 'member how yer looks.

MAMMY—Duse yer really want ter 'member how I looks?

GRINS—I sho' duse.

MAMMY—Well den. Be careful, Mr. Grins. I'se trustin' yer mighty fur.

GRINS—You'se in safe hands, Miss Laura. Now, look sweet, whils I git er focus.

MAMMY—Nigger, you take dat thing erway fum heah, afore hit FOCUSES.

GRINS—Why, dat is er part er takin' de pictur.

MAMMY—Well, den, dar ain't er goin' ter be no pictur. Massar 'Oward didn't haf ter have no FOCUS en I ain't er goin' ter let you.

GRINS—Alright, den, we'll jest leab hit out. Now look pleasant. (Mammy poses. This work may be carried on ad lib. if characters are good, but do not tire audience. When finished, Mammy says:)

MAMMY—Hide dat thing, yonder cum er stranger.

GRINS—(Looks L.) Dat walks lack Mister Robert, but he got whiskers. Lawd, Miss Laura, he's comin' heah.

MAMMY—I'se gwine down ter de falls. (Goes R.)

GRINS—(Going with her.) En I'se gwin ter stay right wid yer. (Enter Robert, disguised.)

ROBERT—Say, old man, whose car is that out there?

GRINS—Dat's Massar 'Oward's cah. Duse yer want ter see him?

MAMMY—I'll go tell him.

GRINS—We'll bofe go tell him.

ROBERT—No, never mind. I'll stroll here in the mountains until he comes back.

GRINS—No, sah, we'l go tell him.

ROBERT—Stop! I don't want you to. You both go back this way.

GRINS—Say, Mistah, ain't yer Mr. Robert.

ROBERT—NAW.

GRINS—Yes, yer is. (Looking at him closely.) Yes, yer is. What yer want ter skeer de ole nigger lack dat fur?

ROBERT—(Drawing gun, which frightens negroes.)

(Enter Bill, L., gun in hand) If you don't go back to the settlement, like I tell you, I will fill both of you full of lead.

BILL—I say, stranger, (QUICKLY), GIVE ME THAT GUN! (Robert hands revolver over.) Now give me a real good reason why they ought ter go back to the settlement.

ROBERT—(Pleasantly.) O, now, my friend, I was just having some fun out of them. I wouldn't hurt either for anything.

BILL—(Handing him revolver.) Then excuse me. I didn't know. You see, here in the mountains, we believe in fair play. Never two agin one, or one ergin two. Jest fair play.

GRINS—I'se er gwin ter tell Massar 'Oward you

cum. Cum on, Miss Laura, I'se erfeard ter leab yer heah widout de pertection uv er genman. (Exit Grins and Mammy, R.)

BILL—Do you know Mr. Carpenter?

ROBERT—Well, I've seen him a few times. Where is he stopping here in the mountains.

BILL—Up thar at my gal's house. Nell Toones. He's er fine fellow.

ROBERT—(Aside.) I'll make him jealous, and he'll kill him for me. (To Bill.) O, I see? That is just like Mr. Carpenter. He often strays off to some pretty girl's house and plays up some great scheme to her parents. Gets the girl in love with him and for awhile takes her away from some good honest fellow who loves her. Then sends her back home to weep on the shoulder of her first love.

BILL—Ye're purty smart fellow, ain't yer. That's comin' purty stout. Kinder slow down on hit er bit.

ROBERT—Yes, it's pretty stout, but that is the only way to put it.

BILL—I don't believe he'd do sich er thing as that, but ef he would, the gal up thar wouldn't let him. You go learn something 'bout er mountain girl.

ROBERT—O, they are pretty, have fine figures and all that. But that is the only kind he likes.

BILL—I like 'em, too, stranger. They are purty, en have roses in their cheeks, en then some. They are as pure as the air they breathe, en as solid as the rocks they play on. En when one tells you she will be true, stake yer life on hit, stranger, fur she is all she says she is.

ROBERT—Alright. You go on dreaming about your Nell, and you will wake up some fine morning to find her gone.

BILL—STOP! You are insultin' me. I've let you go too fur already. (Pulling off coat.) I don't like ter fight, but Nell's my fightin' pint.

ROBERT—Now, my friend, you are not going to misunderstand me like that, I know. Your girl is all you say she is, but that does not make the man a gentleman. I thought you might not know this fellow, and I wanted you to be on guard. He might mistreat her, and you would want to be close by.

BILL—if he or anybody else mistreats Nell Toone, he pays me with his life.

ROBERT—(Aside.) He's my man. (To Bill.) As I came up the mountain I thought I saw a man and woman way down yonder alone in the secrecy of the rocks. Who was that?

BILL—That was Mr. Carpenter and my sweetheart.

ROBERT—My friend, don't be angry with me because I have cautioned you, but I beg you not to permit them to be alone in this way.

BILL—I'm not afeared. (Robert looks, R.)

ROBERT—Look! I see them now. (Bill looks carelessly at first, gradually falling into the trap.) See how close he leans to her ear. See how she gazes up at the mountain side. He is pouring a tale of love into her ear, such as you never heard. Look at his arm.

BILL—Isn't it on the rock behind her?

ROBERT—Yes, it is on the rock behind her, but soon it will encircle her.

BILL—(In a fury.) I'll kill him. (Robert stops him.)

ROBERT—Not now. You might kill your girl. They are coming. Let's hide until they are closer. (Both exit, L. Enter Nell and Howard, R.)

NELL—That was a great plan you were telling me Mr. Carpenter, en hit makes me mighty happy. We are goin' ter remember always how good you are to us. (Enter Bill and Robert, L., and listen.)

HOWARD—Are you sure you love well enough to get married. It is a very serious matter.

NELL—O, my love is alright. I can learn how ter be a good wife. (Bill examines locks of gun.)

BILL—Death is too good fur him.

HOWARD—I'm going to do all I can to make you happy, Nell. Bill is a noble fellow (Bill lowers gun and listens intently) and deserves your love.

NELL—And when you come ter see us, we will give you the best we got.

BILL—(Rushes from behind rock, taking off his hat and saying with feeling.) Mr. Carpenter, I was mean enough ter steal up behind that rock ter hear what yer was sayin' ter Nell. I'm ashamed of it, sir, and ask yer pardon. (Robert draws revolver and shoots Howard down, breaking to run. Bill levels gun he is holding in hands on him.) STOP! you infamous dog, or I'll kill you. (Hands gun to Nell.) Bring him back, Nell, I want him. (Nell takes gun

and rushes out, L., returning immediately with Robert in front of her and covered by the gun.) (In meantime Bill has stooped over Howard and hastily examined him.) He has killed you.

NELL—O, Bill, is he dead?

GRINS—(Enters hurriedly from R. Seeing what has happened, falls over Howard.) O, Massar 'Oward! Who done dis?

BILL—He's bleeding to death. What can we do? Let's get a doctor.

NELL—Let's take him to a good one.

BILL—Hit's fifty miles ter Chattanooga.

GRINS—Dat car er his'n out dar 'l do dat fifty miles in fifty minutes, ef somebody'l hole hit in de road.

BILL—Can you run it?

GRINS—No, sah, but (pointing to Robert) but dat's Mister Robert, en he kin. (Bill goes up to Robert, jerking off false whiskers roughly.) You mean, lying, common, yaller dog. Kin yer run er car?

ROBERT—Naw, I can't.

BILL—Don't lie ter me, or I'll pull yer blame head off. You tried ter kill him, now yer are goin' ter save him. Help us take him up, (all take him up) en be as tender as er woman. (When off stage). Take his head in yer lap, Nell. Crank er up, Grins. Now, stranger, to Chattanooga, en don't furgit, I'M BEHIND YER.

(As curtain falls, try, if possible, to imitate a car leaving in a burst of speed, growing more distant. This is easily done with a motorcycle off L., by closing muffler gradually. If this is not convenient, use automobile horn with good effect.)

ACT IV.

SCENE 1—Operating room, Chattanooga Hospital; thirty-six hours later.

STAGE SETTING—Any plain white room will do. Two operating tables. (Your town physicians will gladly lend these, or if not, use two ordinary cots, with legs pieced out so as to raise about three feet. Cover cots with white sheets.) Small table for clean white porcelain pan for sterilizing instruments.

Place Howard on front table in center of stage, feet to L., and cover with sheet. Absorbent cotton on right side of throat, colored red. Powder his face to show loss of blood. He should be unconscious. Nurse standing by table of instruments.

Place other table immediately behind Howard, foot to right, and overlapping first table about three feet. Dr. Bassett sitting by Howard in close attention. (If your town physicians will take these parts, you will find it a great advantage. If this cannot be done, asks their assistance in rehearsal. The scene is most extraordinary and should be well rendered. Its effect is good.)

MAKE-UP—Use dignified dress as much as possible. If all the doctors are in Prince Alberts, the effect is fine, but if only few of these coats are available, give them to Mr. Carpenter and Dr. Mayben.

DR. BASSETT—(Holding pulse.) Be careful, nurse, to have everything in perfect order. They will be here in a short time.

NURSE—I think everything is ready. (Enter Dr. Speight)

DR. BASSETT—Good-morning, Dr. Speight.

DR. SPEIGHT—How is the patient by now?

DR. BASSETT—He is losing very fast, but holds on miraculously.

DR. SPEIGHT—(Advances to table.) Is he mortally wounded?

DR. BASSETT—I fear he is. When he was brought in from the mountains, there was scarcely a drop of blood in his body. It would have been easy to save

him if we could have attended him more promptly. His wound is not serious beyond the bleeding.

DR. SPEIGHT—Too bad! Too bad! Who is he, anyway? He must be somebody of note, judging from the way the wires are being burnt up with dispatches.

DR. BASSETT—From papers found on his person, and information given by his old negro valet, we take him to be Howard Carpenter, of New York.

DR. SPEIGHT—Great Scott! How strange this is.

DR. BASSETT—Yes, it is not often that we have so wealthy a patient in this hospital. We understand that he is worth about \$100,000,000.00.

DR. SPEIGHT—if that is really Howard Carpenter you have there, you have named the smallest part of his real worth. He is the boy founder of the greatest hospital in the great city of New York, and the best friend the poor and down-trodden have ever known.

DR. BASSETT—Is that so? I might have known. I have been so busy trying to save his life I forgot the personality of the man. But I could not have done more for him had he been my brother.

DR. SPEIGHT—Has his father been advised?

DR. BASSETT—O, yes. We notified him at once, and received a message to spare neither men nor money to save his life. His father left almost instantly on board a special, and has with him the greatest living surgeon, Dr. Mayben, their family physician, Dr. King, and special nurses, and if they keep up their schedule, they will be here in a short time. My heavens, man, that train is setting the world afire. We heard from them at Philadelphia, Washington, Lynchburg, Bristol, and Knoxville, with almost unbelievable speed. I fancy I can see his old, anxious father feeding the engineer's pocket with gold and begging him for just a little more speed. But I fear it is useless. The last message advised preparation for the transfusion of blood. Do you think it the proper thing to do?

DR. SPEIGHT—It is all that can be done. Dr. Mayben is a great surgeon, and has performed some unbelievable work. I shall stay to see the operation. Have you anyone to give the blood?

DR. BASSETT—We supposed he was on board the special.

DR. SPEIGHT—Perhaps so, but we must not endanger this young man's life by our negligence. Most any of the young physicians here in the hospital would volunteer if they knew who he is.

NURSE—(Going to window.) The special is coming in now. My! but it is splitting the city wide open. Why do they let a train run so recklessly?

DR. BASSETT—There is money behind it, nurse.

NURSE—Money can do a great many things, but it cannot defeat death.

DR. SPEIGHT—We shall soon know. How beautiful to have lived so that when the end comes, money and all other material things are counted as but cheap weapons with which to fight it.

NURSE—They are clearing the street of traffic. There comes a car running like mad. Shall I stay, Doctor?

DR. BASSETT—Yes, stay. Is everything prepared?

NURSE—All that I know to prepare.

(Enter Mr. C., Dr. King, Dr. Mayben and Alice, in heavy veil.)

MR. C.—(Anxiously.) How is my son?

DR. BASSETT—Still alive, sir.

MR. C.—Thank God. Gentlemen, this is Dr. King and Dr. Mayben. Let them have full charge. (Dr. Bassett and Dr. Speight move away to R. Dr. King hastily examines Howard. Alice goes to head of table and kneels. Dr. Mayben stands aside, waiting.)

DR. KING—There is no use to examine him further, Mr. Carpenter. It is my sad duty to tell you I never saw a living man further in the shadows, and I fear the end of this great life is here. (Alices raises up and kisses Howard on forehead)

ALICE—Howard! Speak to me.

MR. C.—Who is that woman?

DR. KING—The best nurse in New York, Mr. Carpenter.

DR. MAYBEN—Do you think it too late for the operation?

DR. KING—It is never too late to try, Doctor.

DR. MAYBEN—Mr. Carpenter, we have but one chance to save his life. This is by the transfusion of blood.

MR. C.—(Offering arm.) There, take every drop of it, sir.

DR. MAYBEN—You are too old, Mr. Carpenter.

MR. C.—(To Dr. Speight.) Send out for a proper person. I will pay any price. Be quick!

ALICE—(Rising.) Doctor, will my blood do?

DR. MAYBEN—No, nurse, it must be fresh, strong, young blood, or it would damage rather than save him.

MR. C.—I shall not forget your generosity, Nurse, and shall reward you for it

ALICE—The giving would be its own reward. I do not want your gold, Mr. Capreenter. This life is what I want. God gave it to me, and I claim my own. (Disguises.)

MR. C.—(Surprised.) My God! Alice Kingsley!

ALICE—You hate me, sir, and would not have your son indebted to me for such an office as this, but on the heart of a true woman, I swear that it shall never be used by me to influence him, if by the act, he is lifted up and restored to you. Dr. Mayben, there is danger in delay. This life you seek to save is fast drifting away from me. Let me reach out and reclaim it. (Bears arm to shoulder and thrusts it out to him.) There is blood. **PURE FRESH, STRONG, YOUNG BLOOD.** Take freely as long as my poor heart will pump it forth.

DR. MAYBEN—(To Mr. C.) Have you any objection?

MR. C.—How could I?

DR. MAYBEN—Then let's proceed. (Goes R. with Dr. King.) Prepare their arms, Nurse. (Exit R. Have two operating gowns ready, so that Dr. Mayben and Dr. King may take off their coats and get into them as quickly as possible, returning to table. In meantime Nurse has rubbed Alice's arm, as if sterilizing it.)

DR. KING—Place her (Alice) on the table. I think I had better give you an anaesthetic, Alice.

ALICE—No. I want to remain conscious and watch and pray. "Dear God, guide these skilful hands and raise him up." I am ready. (Offers arm.)

DR. MAYBEN—(Gruffly.) Hand me the scalpel.

(Nurse hands instrument.)

(NOTE—This scalpel should be fixed as follows: Take a bright instrument and fasten along the back side a rubber tube filled with a red fluid, to imitate blood. When Dr. Mayben opens the arm he should squeeze it so as to allow blood to flow over Alice's

arm in plain view of audience. Not working too fast. When the veins have been opened, connect with rubber tube, each doctor holding one to vein. After short space, Dr. King, who has been holding pulse, examines Howard's eyes and listens to heart beat.)

DR. KING—His pulse is growing stronger and more regular. (Mr. C. is rejoiced.)

DR. MAYBEN—(Makes same examination and exclaims.) He is saved. (During this operation nurse has been closely watching Alice. Dr. King and Dr. Mayben proceed to bandage arms.)

DR. SPEIGHT—Let me say, Dr. Mayben, that is what I call robbing the grave.

DR. BASSETT—Wonderful, wonderful!

DR. MAYBEN—Thank you, gentlemen.

MR. C.—Dr. Mayben, and you, gentlemen, who kept him alive against our arrival, I cannot express my gratitude to you. Ask what you will. Nothing is too good for you. My eyes are opening to a wider view of life. I have never cared for anything but piling up gold, not caring what suffering and want followed in the wake of my transactions. But I now publicly acknowledge to all the world a debt which shall be paid with interest. Howard's great work shall never want money again. That poor mountaineer who gave his last penny and would have given his life to bring my son here to you, is far richer than I am because he holds in his heart the satisfaction of having measured up to the standard of a man in faithful and full service to his fellow man. And that marvelous creature who lay there and gave her precious blood until she has gone far into the shadows, how shall I ever requite her love? I have no gold pure enough, no diamond bright enough, to offer her. Indeed it will take something better than gold.

ALICE—(In faint voice.) If you would requite my poor service, Mr. Carpenter, I ask that you take away the sting caused by that letter. (Hands letter.)

MR. C.—(After reading the letter.) The archfiend of hell Robert Woolsey wrote that. And for every sting it has caused your heart, his shall feel a thousand. Howard never felt that way towards you, Alice. The night he thought you had married

the Prince, he talked to me as he had never done before. I shall never forget the triumph of his strength when he said, "She has been faithless, and it crushes me, but I love her, and thank God I feel no blame for her."

ALICE—Then he still loves me. Dr. King, when may I see him?

DR. KING—In the morning, Alice.
(CURTAIN.)

ACT IV.

SCENE 2—Howard's ward. Same.

STAGE SETTING—Plain white room. Howard on cot. Nurse standing by. Dr. King by side of bed.

DR. KING—How has he rested since I left him.

NURSE—Just beautifully. He has been talking just a little about a Princess, and how he loves her. He seems to have been disappointed in a love affair.

DR. KING—That girl who gave her blood is the Princess of whom he is dreaming. When he awakes and learns the truth there will be no further danger of his recovery. She will love him back to life.

NURSE—Was that woman his sweetheart? I thought she was a nurse.

DR. KING—Ha ha. She is a nurse. When I heard of this awful attempt on Howard's life, I knew she would want to be with him, so I went to her and proposed to bring her under disguise. Wasn't that romantic?

NURSE—It was good of you. (Howard moves.)

DR. KING—He is waking. Howard? Howard? (Wakes him.) Howard, do you know me?

HOWARD—(Slowly.) It is Dr. King.

DR. KING—Do you know where you are?

HOWARD—No. I cannot just make out. Where am I and what has happened?

DR. KING—You have had an accident and are very weak from loss of blood. You must be quiet.

HOWARD—Does father know?

DR. KING—Yes. He is here.

HOWARD—Does Alice—O—but she wouldn't care.

DR. KING—Noboby in all the world cares like Alice.

HOWARD—O, Dr. King, do not torture me. You do not know all. Let me forget her.

DR. KING—I'm a pretty wise old fellow, Howard.

I know better than you do that Alice is as true as steel.

HOWARD—Would you mock me while I am so helpless?

DR. KING—I am telling you the truth, Howard. You were almost a dead man. Fresh blood had to be put into your veins that you might live. It was Alice who gave that blood.

HOWARD—Are you telling me a lie?

DR. KING—No. Can't you believe me?

HOWARD—She was already a part of me, but her blood was not in my veins. Now I can never forget her as I should. I must never see her sweet face again. I love her too much. She is another man's wife. You mean well, and you are my friend, but do not say more. Sometime you will know why I ask it. Before she goes won't you thank her for me?

DR. KING—Why don't you thank her?

HOWARD—It would hurt, and I have suffered enough. (Enter Alice, L.)

DR. KING—She is here, Howard. (Dr. King and Nurse stand aside.)

ALICE—(To Dr. King.) May I see him?

DR. KING—Be careful not to excite him. (Alice advances to cot.)

HOWARD—I have just heard of your great generosity, Princess Bavari, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for stooping so low.

ALICE—(Stroking his forehead.) Do you think I have stooped so very low, Howard?

HOWARD—Howard! It sounds mighty sweet to hear you say my name again, and your touch thrills me as no other could; but it must not be.

ALICE—Don't you know I love you better than the world? Say you love me. Do not let me suffer this loneliness any longer.

HOWARD—For pity's sake do not feed my hungry soul on such vain hope, or I shall forget you are a princess.

ALICE—I am greater than a PRINCESS, Howard. I am a woman in love. My heart is as free as you would have it, and it is yours.

HOWARD—(Seeing the truth.) ALICE!

ALICE—Tell me you will never doubt me again.

HOWARD—Little girl, I was a coward to doubt you. You know I love you better than my own life. (Alice

leans over and kisses him.) Though all the heavens fall, I shall always know you are standing true. (Holds up bandaged arm.) And through the years before us I shall never forget that your blood intermingles in my veins with my blood, and coursing through my heart shall always keep it pure and clean.

ALICE—That is a sweet compliment. I am weak and faint, and cannot stay with you longer. When I am stronger, I will come back and sit with you. Be a good boy now, and go to sleep.

HOWARD—And dream the old story of love.

(CURTAIN.)

END.

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